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C O N F I D E N T I A L THE HAGUE 003144

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/22/2015

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [PTER](#) [NL](#) [CIA](#)

SUBJECT: DUTCH DEMARCHE ON SECRET PRISONS, CIA PLANES

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires Chat Blakeman
for Reasons 1.4(b) and (d).

¶11. (C) SUMMARY: The Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs has made a formal request for information regarding recent news reports of secret USG prisons and CIA-contracted planes landing at Dutch airports. Both issues have figured prominently in the Dutch press in recent weeks and promise to be topics of discussion during upcoming appearances by Foreign Minister Bot and Prime Minister Balkenende before the Dutch Parliament. Post requests Department's guidance in addressing MFA's request. END SUMMARY.

¶12. (C) The Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs made a formal request on November 22 for information regarding recent news reports of secret USG prisons in Eastern Europe and CIA-contracted planes landing at Dutch airports. Charge said he would convey the request to Washington.

¶13. (C) In response to questions by Jos Schellars (Deputy Director, Western Hemisphere Department, MFA) and Petra Steinen (Deputy Head, North America Section, MFA), Charge also shared Secretary Rice's remarks at a November 8 Department press briefing in which she addressed the prisons issue.

¶14. (C) Schellars noted both issues have figured prominently in the Dutch press in recent weeks. Foreign Minister Bot will participate in budgetary discussions in Parliament on November 23 and 24 and will most likely face questions about both issues, Schellars explained. Schellars added that Prime Minister Balkenende is appearing before Parliament today and probably will face similar questions.

¶15. (C) Schellars urged the U.S. to provide as much information as possible and pointed to Bot's recent comments that the U.S. should not "play hide and seek" with regard to the prisons. Schellars said the prison issue is playing a role "in the background" of ongoing debate about Dutch military involvement in Afghanistan.

BLAKEMAN